



Ambassador Rodley Hosts New Fulbright Grantees in Pre-Departure Orientation

By Ms Sar Samphors, Fulbright Scholar, 2008-2010

The U.S. embassy based in Phnom Penh, Cambodia organized the pre-departure orientation for new Cambodian Fulbright grantees on Wednesday, June 23, 2010.

The ceremony was opened by Ambassador Carol A. Rodley and H.E. Phoeung Sakona, Secretary of State of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports.

After the opening session, Mr. Nguon Pheakdey, who represented 2010 Cambodian Fulbright scholars, made a speech that touched the heart of everyone there. He mentioned, "I dearly love and respect my parents, but I would like to say that the one person who has always been my number one fan would be my grandmother. So grandma, this is for you."

Not only did these new Cambodian Fulbright grantees attend the event, but their significant others were also cordially invited. Additionally, Mr. Theam Rottanak, the President of the Fulbright Alumni Association of Cambodia along with Mr. Chui Chamnan and Ms. Sar Samphors, 2010 Fulbright returnees were asked to share substantial experiences that would help them to adapt to the new academic and social environment in the U.S. once they embark on a journey in a country widely known as "the land of freedom and opportunity."

It is not uncommon that annually the American government sponsors eight to ten Cambodian scholars under the Fulbright program to study in the U.S. Seven Cambodian scholars, one of whom gets the offer for the doctoral degree, are granted by the program this year. Thus far, a total of 17 Cambodian Fulbright grantees, seven of whom are new scholars of 2010 and ten of whom are currently pursuing their study in the U.S., is funded by American government to complete their graduate studies.



Ms. Rodley (left) and Nguon Pheakdey, Fulbright Grantee 2010 (right) at Pre-Departure Orientation

Alumni in Action

By Sok Sovanchandara, FAAC Volunteer

In conjunction with IFL debate club, two well-known FAAC figures Chan Virak and Chan Sophal and a US embassy representative Mr. Bun Sambath on May led a trip to Battambang province, a journey aimed to enhance students' learning performance through the promotion of establishing study club, in which six high profile debaters and two FAAC volunteers also joined.



Chan Virak Talking to Students in Battambang about Ways to Improve Learning Performance.

Reaching the hall entrance of the University of Battambang, everyone felt delighted to see a sheer population of participants queuing for seats. After a warm welcome from the school management, the six debaters were... **(Continue on page 4)**

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Various FAAC Activities from March to June, 2010: Giving Certificate of Appreciation to FAAC Volunteers and Information-Sharing Sessions

To showcase the contributions our alumni have made to the nation, we create this space for profile articles of our alumni. In this edition, we feature Mr. Chim Guanghui, Senior Operations Manager, ANZ Royal Bank

Please tell us about your work and educational background.

I work at ANZ Royal Bank as Regional Manager in charge of retail banking outside of Phnom Penh and I am based in Siem Reap. Recently I was appointed to a new role as Senior Operations Manager and will move back to Phnom Penh in July 2010. I graduated from the Institute of Foreign Languages in 1994, received a Masters Degree in East Asian Languages and Cultures from the University of Kansas in 1997, and spent a year in 1998 learning Mandarin at Nankai University in Tianjin, China.

What was your biggest challenge when applying for a Fulbright scholarship?

Honestly, back in 1994 I did not have any major problem in applying for the Fulbright scholarship. The Fulbright program had just returned to Cambodia at that time and there was a dearth of qualified candidates. It was no wonder that many candidates from the IFL like myself were selected. Now I can appreciate the tough challenges facing hundreds or thousands of highly qualified candidates competing for this prestigious scholarship every year.

What did you gain from studying in America, as a Fulbright scholar?

It truly changed my life. Not so much academically, although I did study and got straight As every term, but more socially. It was such a big world out there both awe-inspiring and overwhelming for a young person from Cambodia back in 1995 all by myself in Kansas. Fortunately, I allowed myself to go with the flow and experience everything that was thrown at me. However, amid all these melting pots of experiences I constantly maintained a self-restraint that kept me from stepping over the lines. I think in the end my two years in America instilled in me a greater sense of integrity, independence, courage, discipline, balance in life, adventure, hope, and optimism.

What do you like the most about your current job?

I am passionate about what I'm doing now. I define my work by how much positive impact it has on the people around me. It creates more meaning for my life. I derive my greatest pleasure from seeing my 80 staff members grow and develop into new leaders through my coaching and training. My greatest hope is to see them carry on the values and disciplines and make their little world a better place. This is the little contribution that I can make to humanity.

Were you able to use your professional major you chose at the university in your daily work? If yes, in what way?

Honestly not much. Not many people end up working in the field that they studied for. And that's real life. To define the relevance of your studies to the current work you are doing is too narrowly focused in a world that is very complex and constantly in flux. Of course, my academic experience in the U.S. does offer me many advantages such as the English language skills, creative thinking, communication skills, etc. *After coming from America, what have you brought back to contribute to the country development?*

After my return from America I spent eight years going from one job to another. It was like a walk in the wilderness and I don't think I created much value during that time. Only in the last three years have I finally gained the self-awareness of what I wanted to do in my life. I have become a manager and leader of a portion of a private enterprise, where I have been able to carve out a niche where I can contribute in leading the people and the business in bringing best business practices to customers in Cambodia.



Chim Guanghui, Fulbright Scholar, 1995-1997

Would your life be any different if you hadn't applied for this scholarship?

Definitely it would be, but I can't say for better or for worse. Life is full of unpredictability and how it unfolds depends on all the decisions you take along the way.

Chim Guanghui in Brief

Education

- Nankai University (China) Associate, Chinese Language, 97-98
- University of Kansas (USA) M.A., East Asian Languages & Cultures, 95-97
- Royal University of Phnom Penh, Bachelor Teaching English as a Second Language, 90-94

Work Experience

- Senior Operations Manager, July 2010
- Present Regional Manager at ANZ Royal Bank, 2008-2010
- Service Quality Manager at ANZ Royal Bank, 2007-2008
- Management Consultant at Chip Mong Group Co., Ltd, 2006
- General Manager at KTM Co., Ltd, 2005
- Trade Marketing Development Manager at British American Tobacco (Cambodia), 2004
- Marketing Skills Development Manager at British American Tobacco (Cambodia), 2003
- Senior Area Manager at British American Tobacco (Cambodia), 03
- Area Manager at British American Tobacco (Cambodia), 01-03
- Management Trainee at British American Tobacco (Cambodia), 99-01
- Lecturer at Royal University of Phnom Penh, Institute of Foreign Languages, 94-95



Photos of FAAC Board Meeting in Preah Sihanouk province, March 07-08, 2010 and in Phnom Penh, May 23, 2010

Reaching Goals with Fulbright

By Ms Lim Chakrya, Fulbright Scholar, 2004-2006

Coming to the United States to continue my education was one of my main goals in life. While in High School, I liked to read books written in simple French and English about students' lives in foreign countries, particularly Western countries. Those books made me long to experience an academic life in a foreign country myself. So the only way to get what I wanted was to get a scholarship which was always intensely competitive. After high school, I started my college life at the National University of Management (NUM). Throughout the years, I started hearing success stories of older NUM students who received scholarships to study abroad. Each time I heard it, I felt so excited but at the same time nervous. In my third year at NUM, I attended the Fulbright information session when former Fulbright scholars inspired me and shared their experiences from the U.S. From that session, I made a commitment to continue my study for a Master's degree in a foreign country, and the Fulbright scholarship would be my first option.

I remember that even though I knew which scholarship I really wanted, I was not sure when would be the best time for me to apply. All I knew was it would be great if I could get the scholarship right after I graduated from NUM. The 2003-2004 Fulbright scholarship announcement finally came out some time in April 2002. I joined the competition but my first attempt did not work out. By the time I submitted the application, I still had not finished my last semester at NUM. Fortunately, my dream to earn a Master's degree and experience an academic life in the United States came true through my second attempt in the 2004-2005 competition. I left Cambodia

August 2004, and I received my Master's degree in May 2006.

In addition to the two-year academic program, the Fulbright also allows a one-year extension to most scholars to earn practical experience related to their field of study in the States. I thus applied to join the Illinois Governor Office's Dunn Fellowship Program to work for the Illinois State Government. And I was selected. I was placed in the Governor's Office of Management and Budget to serve as a Budget Analyst. The whole Fulbright experience has been amazing for me. It has opened my eyes to see the world with a much broader perspective. I have learned so much academically, professionally, and culturally. The Fulbright scholarship has equipped me with knowledge and experience that will forever enrich the quality of my life. Without the Fulbright scholarship, I would not be where I am now.



Because of how great the Fulbright experience has been for me, I strongly encourage other Cambodians to work hard to be a part of this life-changing experience. We shall never be afraid to dream big and aim high. The process to get the Fulbright scholarship was challenging, but I got through it by always reminding myself of a phrase that one of my closest friends had shared with me. It is, "the winner is not the smarter, the stronger or the faster; the winner is the one who thinks he or she can." We all have... **(Continue on page 4)**

Retelling Story: How to Succeed in School

By LY Dalin, FAAC Volunteer

"How to make the most of school time" was a seminar lectured by Ms Dek Dary, a Fulbright alumna. The class was held at Institute of Foreign Languages (IFL) on June 14, 2010.



Ms. Dek Dary, Fulbright Scholar 2007-2008 and University Students after an Information-Sharing Session

Ms. Dary raised critical points of how to improve study skills. Most concerns in studying raised by the students were related to how to improve reading and writing skills in English.

By no surprise, there is no rule of thumb to improve these skills overnight. What was interesting was that Ms. Dary is a big fan of extensive reading and encouraged the participants to read and not feel discouraged by vocabulary barriers.

In addition to study skills, Ms. Dary shared her experience in building self-confidence and her study in the United States under the Fulbright Scholarship. She was quite keen on pushing the students to view the world on the positive side and not be defeated by negative feelings they may have upon themselves. She mentioned that "to blame yourselves and to 'accept' that that you are not as good as you have thought of yourselves to be is, perhaps, the worst crime that you can commit to yourself as a student."

Finally, her last advice to the students was getting themselves ready for networking, as this is, perhaps, the most crucial skill a person should have. The utmost importance of communication skill is, based on her, very simple: (1) listen and (2) keep a positive attitude towards everyone. Besides that, it is very important to have broad general knowledge so that one can mingle with people from various backgrounds.

Ms. Dary left Cambodia in 2007 to pursue her master degree in Global Marketing Communication and Advertising at Emerson College in Boston, Massachusetts. She added the experience abroad was an opportunity for her to grow, be independent and be mature. To fulfill her long-life dream, she has been exerting herself to do things for the best and do not ever fear to work extra hard. She is now an Associate at Frontier Investment & Development Partners (FIDP), and part-time lecturer at Department of Media and Communications, specializing in Marketing & Advertising and Media Management, and at University of Puthisastra, specializing in Service Marketing.

Throughout my personal observation, she has a strong commitment in life. She believes in what she is doing and is ready to translate chances into opportunity. It was a 90-minute lecture about study, confidence, and staying positive. After the lecture, I wish more and more scholars like Ms. Dary will try to set aside their time to share experiences, to inspire and motivate the students to work hard and give back to the society. I am looking forward to the next speakers from the Fulbright Alumni very soon!



Fulbright Grantees 2010 and Families at the Pre-Departure Orientation Hosted by Ambassador Carol Rodley on 23 June, 2010

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given floor to conduct model of debate, with the notion “This house believes that education should be privatized.” This live debate completely captured the audiences’ attention. As soon as the debate ended, Chan Virak continued to present debate guidelines in general, following by Chan Sophal’s presentation stressing on how students could form self-learning group in particular.

The debate model appeared to be so interesting that many different groups of students approached the debaters outside the hall to have an additional discussion. Some students were interested in asking for further debating advice, while others wanted to listen to comments on how to better improve their English language.

The procedure applied at the University of Battambang was also applied at the University of Management. The debate model started immediately after a brief self-introduction. The process went on smoothly from the start to the end, fostering curiosity in everyone. Meanwhile, Chan Virak and Sophal caught up with their slide presentation, which eventually invited good questions from the audience who expressed their great interest in self-learning club formation. The effort ended with promising follow-up activities from both groups of students of the two universities and; after all, this trip was a labor of love and high expectation of the students of Battambang.

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strengths and weaknesses, but we must never let our weaknesses hold us from getting what we want in life. Instead, we need to focus on our strengths, clearly define what we really want, plan our steps and take those steps, little or big, to reach our goals. We will get it if we want something badly enough.

FAAC Newsletter is a quarterly publication of the Fulbright Alumni Association of Cambodia for those valuing education and development.

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Financial Support Provided by

The Embassy of the United States of America in Cambodia

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